

**OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL**  
**201 North Scoville Avenue**  
**Oak Park, IL 60302**

**INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**January 13, 2015**

An Instruction Committee meeting was held on January 13, 2015. Dr. Gevinson called the meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were Dr. Steve Gevinson, Dr. Jackie Moore, and Sharon Patchak-Layman. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; David Ruhland, Director of Human Resources; Gwen Walker-Qualls, Interim Director of Special Education; Tod Altenburg, Chief School Business Official; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Sheila Hardin, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

**Visitors:** Ralph Lee, Board of Education member; Sarah Roodhouse, Fine & Applied Arts Division Head; Patrick Pearson, Music Department Faculty, and Mills Selkregg, student.

**Visitor Comment**

None

**Minutes**

Dr. Gevinson moved to approve the Instruction Committee minutes of December 9, 2014; seconded by Ms. Patchak-Layman. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

**Update From Fine and Applied Arts Division**

The Fine and Applied Arts Division has a broad range of courses. Whether in classes in the Visual Arts, Music, Speech Arts, Family and Consumer Science, or Applied Technology Departments, students are encouraged to express themselves and to further develop those skills that communicate their individual ideas. Classes range from studio-oriented hands-on classes, to rehearsal and performance-based classes, as well as traditional classroom-based instructional settings.

A new development is that a new Early Childhood teacher has been engaged at the River Forest Community Center and this will allow OPRFHS students to plan lessons, observe classes, and as a final project, co-teach one class. In Business Education, a serve corps program was developed: students can take an exam for Microsoft Specialist, which gives them a real-world certificate/credentials in which they can get jobs. Tracy VanDinen, newly hired in Visual Arts, has been a leader of 3-dimensional art in mosaics. He has started a community project. Ms. Selkregg, having never participated in visual arts previously nor even be in the art hallways, was invited to assist on a team that was making a mosaic on the third floor lead by Mr. VanDinen. She explained that while there will be opportunities for future students to add to it, this team's work will be completed this year. Mr. VanDinen has much experience with restorative justice and has worked on projects in Austin, Grand Rapids, etc.

The music program has grown by 200 students in the past 2 years. Fine and Applied Arts is looking at how to sustain that. In performing arts, TV and film students are creating in-house productions, so much student engagement is occurring. Ms. Roodhouse felt the investment in this division builds positive school culture for students by helping them to make good decisions. Ways to document value-added student growth will be explored. All in all, The Fine and Applied Arts Division puts on over 200 events in a year.

Mr. Pearson spoke about the growth in the music department with 252 students in band, 120 students in orchestra, 50 students in performance arts, 28 students in AP music theory, etc. It is a place for students to participate without audition or background. The three orchestras are filling their rooms. The school also has marching band, jazz ensembles, vocal ensembles, etc. Students in the music department travel domestically and internationally. The communities of Oak Park and River Forest value the arts and culture. These communities have strong public and private feeder schools. OPRFHS hosts concerto competitions using judges from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. PING is a feeder program that provides instruments for the next generation that was started in the junior highs and carried over to the high school about 10 years ago. Students who cannot afford their own instrument will pay \$10 per year for them and receive free lessons which are taught by high school students. PING also offers free tickets to events, social gatherings, etc. PING is becoming a model for the nation. Three years ago it was run by parents and community members who graduated from OPRFHS. PING won a grant last year and is applying for it again this year. This program started with donated instruments.

Technology is being used more and more. Every student has a subscription to music software sites, access to music labs with 20 computers, and 20 keyboards. Students are using logic software in a new production class.

In addition to students participating in the District's ensembles, they also participate in all-state ensembles and OPRFHS has had 3 or 4 all state winners and at least one person showcased each year. The music department puts on the Prisms of Winter concert, a spring concert, jazz and vocal showcases. Students in an ensemble for four years will have had the opportunity to compose 4 music pieces by the time they graduate. The department is working on curriculum maps and finding ways of foster this growth. The Fine and Applied Arts Division represents the racial demographics of the school in all of its departments. One of the Division's goals is to work on equity and provide students of color the opportunity to move up the pipeline and to reduce any possible barriers.

Discussion ensued about integrated learning. Small projects are occurring with drawing projects and science. More partnerships are desired. The philosophy of the department is to meet students where they are and help them with higher order thinking and this takes collaboration. The administration supports the projects, but additional resources might be needed to show the integration and how it might work in other areas. Sometimes students are frustrated because they cannot take the classes they want do take. The District used to have a 9 periods per day but now there are 8. Some students are taking online on-line and correspondence classes so they can take more classes.

The enrollment growth in music could be attributed to the fact that music classes are now included in the GPA, the department's connection to the audience via Prisms, sound production in digital music, online assessment, and the expansion of show choir, etc. It is a matter of good teamwork. Performing arts teachers teach classes during the day, attend night events, and participate at competitions. It is also due to the planning outside of the building via APPLAUSE!, the parent group, and the fact that feeder schools have a strong music program and the high school is in constant communication with them. This community has a reputation in music.

The Division has made growth in its own unification through lots of one-on-one conversations, teamwork and people connecting across departments. It is a large division with many things occurring. Mr. Prale was credited for helping with its cohesiveness. These courses are elective courses and they have to be worthwhile or students will not register for them.

The Instruction Committee unanimously recommended that a report be sent to the Board of Education with more detailed added.

**Institute Day Report**

The Instruction Committee unanimously recommended that the Institute Day Report in the packet be forward to the Board of Education as an informational item.

**Additional instruction**

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked for a recap of the components of the evaluation of programs as discussed previously. Are there programs that need change, additions, deletions? This will be addressed at the February meeting.

**Adjournment**

Dr. Gevinson moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:46 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Patchak-Layman. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Submitted by Gail Kalmerton  
Clerk of the Board